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THE LIGHT OF HISTORY

PROF. JESSE LAWSON'S REVIEW OF THIRTY YEARS.

From Grant to Roosevelt—Progress Shown in Everything Except Political Ethics—The Question of Suffrage—Remedies Suggested. * * *

Prof. Jesse Lawson, of New Jersey, a leader in the political affairs of his State and one of the most potential factors in the National Afro-American Council delivered a highly significant address Tuesday evening before the Bethel Literary and Historical Association. The meeting was held at Metropolitan A. M. E. Church, and the audience in attendance was large and representative. Prof. Lawson said:

Mr. President, and Members of the Bethel Literary and Historical Association:

Three and thirty years have rolled into history, and a new generation has come upon the stage of action since Ulysses S. Grant was inaugurated President of the United States in 1869. The population was then about forty millions of souls; it is now about double that number. Our territory was then confined to the continent of North America, and extended from ocean to ocean, but now the sun never sets upon our possessions. From generation to generation our sons have had it dinned into their ears that: "Westward the course of empire takes its way," until we have gone so far west that we find ourselves in the east. Our commerce has kept pace with our expansion of territory, and we have advanced in intellectual pursuits; in the arts and sciences, and in everything that goes to make up a great and powerful nation, with but one exception. The United States is now considered as a world power that must be reckoned with in any equation of nations. We have made rapid strides upwards in every department of human endeavor save one, and that one will form the burden of my address on this occasion.

When Grant held the reins of government in 1869, patriotism in this country was at its height. We had just passed through a great sanguinary conflict, and this nation had been baptized in a sea of blood. The shackles had been stricken from off the limbs of four millions of slaves, and the organic law of the land had been so amended as to forbid slavery upon any territory of the United States. By his daring deeds, even in the face of death, and by his heroic courage upon many a hard fought battlefield, the Negro had demonstrated his fitness for freedom and citizenship. He was respected at the North and everywhere in the North hand of fellowship was extended to him. He had friends at home and abroad, in the States' legislatures, in our National House of Representatives, and in the United

MEN OF THE HOUR.



JOHN W. PATTERSON, ESQ..

A Leading Member of the Bar of the District of Columbia.

States Senate, and he was hailed as the coming man! "He came, he saw," and was conquered. In the midst of this era of good feeling it was very proper and meet that the right of suffrage should have been conferred upon him. It was the natural outcome of the war in which he had borne a conspicuous and honorable part, and an incident to his citizenship in this country. In his first message to Congress President Grant recommended the adoption of a Constitutional Amendment forbidding the United States or any State to make the right to vote dependent upon race, color or previous condition of servitude. The people were with Grant, and Congress in those days obeyed the voice of the people. He had been in the White House about thirteen months, when the people, responding to his call under the matchless leadership of Senator William M. Stewart of Nevada, made the Fifteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution a part of the organic law of the land. Said Amendment was adopted April 30, 1870, and completed the work of reconstruction. It made the lately emancipated slave a full fledged American citizen, and the equal of any other person in the eyes of the law. He had been a factor in American politics all the days of his life, notwithstanding the fact that he had no voice in the affairs of government. Now that he had a voice, and that backed up by a vote, he became an important factor, and one to be

reckoned with before nominating conventions and at the polls. He had something to give, and men sought him out. He and Grant had been comrades in arms. They had fought together for the preservation of the Union, and to keep "old glory" from trailing in the dust! Grant knew the value of the Negro to any cause. He also knew the kind of material of which the Southern people were composed. He had tested their mettle on the field of action. Six hundred thousand men in the Southland, hemmed in from the rest of the world, almost poverty stricken, with practically no great manufacturing industries, and the sympathies of civilization against them, had for four long years successfully contended against the Northern forces with a million and a half of men, and unlimited resources. The remnant of the Southern chivalry was still alive; overpowered, but not conquered. Accustomed to command, they were illly prepared to receive orders from others, and especially from their late slaves. Grant understood the temperament of the Southern people, and, like a wise man, as he was, he left nothing to chance.

The first act of the Grant administration was to recognize the fact that the war was fought for the maintenance of principle, and that principle was national supremacy in every part of our common country. The white

SIMPLY A FIGURE-HEAD

TRUE STATUS OF A PUTATIVE CHICAGO EDITOR.

F. L. Barnett the Conservator's Real Proprietor and Transfers are Made With Strings to Them—Mary J. Johnson Produces Damaging Testimony.

The following letter from a substantial citizen of Memphis, Tenn., explains itself. It sustains our position with reference to the Chicago Conservator and its alleged editor, and places a proper estimate upon elements that discredit the efforts of right-thinking and high purposed Afro-Americans. The communication is as follows:

Editor of The Colored American:— I am a young woman struggling to get an education in the Southland, and I am trying to amount to something in this country. I try to read every paper I can get my hands on, especially those edited by our people, and in this way I keep posted on what we are doing for our own elevation. I had the pleasure of reading your paper a few days ago, and I am proud of the kind of paper you are giving to our people. I saw what you had to say about a patent back sheet way up in Chicago, which has the brass of a mule to call itself a paper.

There are some people in this country who have as much brass as a "Government Mule," and this will apply to the would-be-editor of the sheet which imposes itself on the public under the name of The Conservator. You speak right when you say that it is edited by many people, for I have had a friend in the office who knows all about it. That man Wilkins is simply a figure-head in the office, and is a tool from toolville. He is just a little more than the city collector, but he does not write the editorials, and I am told that he could not write them if he wanted too.

The paper is owned by F. L. Barnett, and has not been out of his hands for a few years. Several parties have tried to buy it, but he is such a fishy lawyer that he fixes things up so that the paper falls back into his hands. Rev. DeClelland, tried his hand, but before he knew what he was about it was back in the hands of Barnett, and now in order to get back at people he doesn't lie, he works behind the cover and hires a tool to act as editor.

Such men are a disgrace to the newspaper fraternity. While I do not mean to call Hon. F. L. Barnett out of his name and would not if I could, and could not if I would, for he is an honorable gentleman, but I would rather trust a regular cut-throat than to trust him. A cut-throat will not lie, he will not rob old people out of their money and property, pretending to be their lawyer, and they are straight in their dealing.

A lecture was given at Bethel Church, recently and I am told that

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